CITY OF VANCOUVER
PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Price: $3.00

REPORTS TO COUNCIL

SUBJECT: VANCOUVER VIEWS STUDY - IMPLEMENTATION DATE: DECEMBER, 1989

COMMITTEE ACTION:

CITY COUNCIL ACTION:

OTHER:

This consolidation of documents contains the following:

- Minutes of Vancouver City Council meeting of December 12, 1989 (including remarks from various delegations).
- Vancouver Views Study - Implementation: Summary Report of October 27,1989 (By the City Manager and the Director of Planning)
- Vancouver Views Study - Implementation: Full Report of October 27, 1989 (By the City Manager and the Director of Planning)
- Vancouver Views Study report of December 6, 1989 (By the Vancouver City Planning Commission)
- Letter to Vancouver City Council from the Citizen's Representatives - Views Consultancy Steering Committee of December 11, 1989

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING THIS REPORT OR FOR DETAILS OF OTHER PLANNING DEPARTMENT PUBLICATIONS CALL INFORMATION SERVICES, OVERALL PLANNING AT 873-7782

DELEGATIONS

EACH DELEGATION IS REQUESTED TO RESTRICT ITS PRESENTATION TO FIVE (5) MINUTES IN DEFERENCE TO OTHER SPEAKERS

COMMENCING AT APPROX. 7:30 P.M.

1. Vancouver Views Study - Implementation

Manager's Report, dated October 27, 1989, was widely circulated on November 9, 1989, noting that Council would be hearing delegations at today's meeting.

The City Manager, Director of Planning, and various staff members will make a presentation.

(i) Report of Vancouver City Planning Commission dated December 6, 1989

(ii) Letter dated December 11, 1989, from Citizen Representatives, Views Consultancy Steering Committee

DELEGATIONS:

Mrs. E. Jarvis, on behalf of Views Consultancy Steering Committee
Mr. A. Hebert, Chairman, Vancouver City Planning Commission
Mr. D.R. Podmore, Executive Vice-President, VLC Properties
Mr. F. Musson, Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership
Mr. S. Ronin, President, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Association
Mr. R. Downey, Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board
Mr. J. Cox, Urban Development Institute Pacific Region
Mr. M. Huggins, 3342 West 12th Avenue
Mr. A.W. Everett, 2697 S.W. Marine Drive
Mr. J. Rogers, President, Downtown Vancouver Assn.
Mr. P. Merrick, Paul Merrick Architects Limited
Mr. R. Fasan, Project Architect, Aitken Wreglesworth Associates
Mr. W. Powell, 6131 Douglas Street
Mr. J. Lehto, Principal, Urban Design & Development Consulting Ltd.
Mr. M. Andreassen, Vice President & Secretary Treasurer, Downtown Toyota Centre
Mr. M. Sakai, Urbanics Consultants Ltd.
Mr. C. Green, President, Richards Street Management Ltd
Mr. I. Beveridge, Executive Director, Building Owners & Managers Association B.C.
Mr. B.M. Davis, Director, Design & Construction, CAMPEAU Corporation
Ms. J. Morelli, 320 East Hastings Street

DELEGATIONS

1. Vancouver Views Study
Implementation: Summary Report

Before Council was a summary report from the City Manager dated October 27, 1989, prepared in consultation with the Director of Planning, concerning the implementation of a Vancouver Views Study, and forwarding a second report of the same date.

It was noted that the purpose of the report was to convey to Council the final report of the Consultants on the Vancouver Views Study; to recommend a strategy for immediate protection of threatened views in a short-term; to recommend that the Planning Department report back as soon as possible on the further work and resources necessary to implement the study recommendations; and to discharge the Steering Committee with Council's thanks.

Also before Council was a report from the Chairman of the Vancouver City Planning Commission, in which the following recommendations were submitted:

A. THAT Council adopt as City policy the preservation of important designated public views as a matter of principle.

B. THAT Council approved recommendation A of the City Manager's Report of October 27, 1989 to allow the City to proceed with immediate action to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Vancouver Views Study except with respect to the Granville Street Bridge view cones, for which the Commission urges immediate implementation; and that consideration be give to City staff alternatives contained in the Manager's Report.

C. THAT Council provide the resources and scheduling required to carry out the follow up work recommended in the Consultant's report and outlined in the City Manager's Report.

In a letter dated December 11, 1989, the four citizen representatives on the Views Consultancy Steering Committee expressed support for the work of the Consultants and the recommendations contained in the report from the City Manager. However, the representatives did have several concerns and suggestions which Council was asked to consider in conjunction with the Consultant's report and City Manager's Report as follows:

a) There should be a full economic impact assessment of each view corridor prior to the Public Hearing that will put the corridors into the zoning.

b) There should be further study of ways and means to mitigate negative impacts of a Views Policy on individual properties, and such measures should be implemented along with changing zoning for views.

c) There should be adequate time and commitment to have wide public discussion as well as detailed information provided to affected people in preparation for a Public Hearing on new zoning for views.

d) As negotiations proceed now with individual property owners touched by this Interim Views Policy, any measures now available in zoning or City policy (such as transfer of density) that could be used to mitigate economic loss should be fully exploited.

Cont'd

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

Vancouver Views Study
Implementation: Summary Report (Cont'd)

Mr. F. Bowers, City Manager, introduced the reports and advised that the study was commissioned by Council in December, 1988. The work has been guided by a Steering Committee consisting of the City Manager, Mr. L. Beasley, Associate Director-Central Area Division and Mr. B. Maitland, Manager of Properties. There were also four citizen representatives on the Steering Committee namely: Mr. Ian Carter, Mr. Ronald Downey, Ms. Elizabeth Jarvis and Ms. Nancy McKinstry.

The study was completed by a team of consultants including Busby Bridger Architects, MTR Consultants Ltd., and Coriolis Consulting Corporation. This team followed a series of steps including:

- phone interviews
- review of existing policies in other major cities
- view cones analysis
- economic analysis
- public meetings.

One of the major findings in the study is that Vancouverites consider views to be very important and worth protecting. The most important views are presently well protected by a variety of measures including:

- shoreline protection put in place in past years
- park system
- bridges
- street ends and design of the street system
- height limitations.

Some additional measures of protection are required over and above what presently exists. Mr. Bowers noted that Council has discretionary zoning powers in the downtown area. Views can be preserved with a fair degree of equity.

Mr. L. Beasley provided Council with a review of the two reports from the City Manager, and it was noted that the basic thrust of the Manager's recommendations is to support the Consultant's findings. The proposal is intended as an Interim Views Policy to protect public views, not private views, and guard against any further loss of important views. The Consultant's survey confirmed that people want a good level of views preservation, and that action be taken to preserve views. The Consultant's review of 27 cities found only 2 viable ways to conserve views, either setting up view points and cones, together with associated heights, or setting pervasive height limits to preserve a wider array of views. Based on the public survey, the Consultants identified 27 view situations and recommended 25 be protected, and suggested two cases which require more study. Two further view situations were suggested in the public meeting, and have been recommended.

The Consultants have categorized the specific views as being:

- not threatened (thirteen views)
- street end views (easily protected)
- threatened views (nine views identified by the Consultant).

Mr. Beasley provided a detailed review of the views which are considered threatened, and advised that the most difficult view situation is from the south shore of False Creek. Some of these views have already been blocked by downtown approvals. Two view situations were suggested by the public and are recommended for inclusion in the policy, those being the Jericho site and Cambie Bridge.

Cont'd

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

Vancouver Views Study
Implementation: Summary Report (Cont'd)

The Manager's report represents an Interim Views Policy based upon the Consultant's work, and provides a basis on which to conduct negotiations with developers and a good process to move forward on.

The following delegations were heard:

Ms. E. Jarvis, Views Consultancy Steering Committee, noted that the four citizen representatives were made up of two representatives from the development community and two citizens at large, which made for a good balance on the Steering Committee. It was also beneficial to have the citizen representatives involved in the study from the beginning. Ms. Jarvis noted that while they are supportive of the findings in the Consultant's Study, as well as the recommendations from the City Manager, there are several concerns and suggestions which Council was requested to consider and are outlined in the letter from the citizens representatives dated December 11, 1989, and noted herein.

Mr. A. Herbert, Chairman Vancouver City Planning Commission, noted that a report dated December 6, 1989 has been submitted on behalf of the VCPC containing three recommendations. Mr. Herbert spoke to these recommendations and urged Council to proceed immediately with their implementation.

Mr. F. Musson, Musson, Cattel, Mackey Partnership, noted the Manager's Report does not include an image of the views, and it is essential that any ongoing documents should include current photographs. Mr. Musson expressed concern that the view cones are from specific points of reference, and as you move away from the specific location other sites may be affected to a greater or lesser degree. It was also suggested the Park Board should adhere to the height limits in terms of maintaining trees on public property. Council was encouraged to make sure that negotiation with individual property owners is fairly conducted and this interim policy does not become firmly entrenched in the zoning By-law.

Mr. B. Scragg, Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board, expressed concern that the process followed for the Views Study has not provided for public participation. Before any further action is taken, Mr. Scragg recommended the community, particularly those sites specifically affected, be given an opportunity to review the Study and provide a response. Concern was also expressed regarding the nature of the questions which were posed as part of the public opinion survey, as they were emotionally charged. It is considered the use of view cones, as proposed, is equivalent to down-zoning, and until the Views Policy is site-specific there needs to be extensive negotiations with the affected property owners.

Mr. J. Cox, Urban Development Institute Pacific Region, congratulated staff and the Consultants for the work completed to date on the Views Study. Speaking in support of the recommendations contained in the Manager's Report, Mr. Cox indicated this is the first step in a Views Policy, and it is very important to refine each view corridor and its implications.

Cont'd

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

Vancouver Views Study
Implementation: Summary Report (Cont'd)

Mr. M. Huggins, 3342 West 12th Avenue, commended the efforts of the study team, but felt the main problem lies in how the report summarizes the material. Mr. Huggins noted there are three kinds of views, those being: distant views, approach views and inner-city views. The recommendations before Council are in conflict with this philosophy. The height limitations are counter-productive, and there is an opportunity for the co-existence of natural and man-made views. Council was encouraged to defer the report and request staff to consider alternative kinds of views as noted. In the meantime, development permits should be processed based on current heights and restrictions.

Mr. J. Rogers, President, Downtown Vancouver Association, stated that while he is genuinely in favour of views protection, the report before Council is flawed. Mr. Rogers pointed out that 20% of the people surveyed actually thought views were enhanced by the buildings in the downtown area. The Interim Views Policy should be deferred until this matter has been through a series of public meetings. Property owners have not had an opportunity to see how specific buildings will be affected.

Mr. P. Merrick, Paul Merrick Architects Ltd., stated that from a public point of view, according to the survey which was conducted, most of the highly valued views in the City are not threatened. Those views which require a reasonably sophisticated mechanism of control are those which are of very litte, if any, interest to the public at large. Therefore, the mechanism proposed for regulating views should not be adopted, and Council should encourage more, not less, flexibility. Mr. Merrick suggested Council consider eliminating height regulations in the downtown area as there are other factors such as site size and market characteristics that will regulate and control heights within reasonable limits. By exploring a more creative and constructive way of regulating heights it will result in a much richer and more varied realization.

Mr. R. Fasan, Project Architect, Aitken Wreglesworth Associates, questioned the manner in which the specific view points were chosen. As density and height are inter-related, any imposed height reductions will have definite market impacts. Mr. Fasan questioned whether there is really a need for a further layer of development controls, and hoped Council would consider this question before adopting a Views Policy.

Mr. W. Powell, 6131 Douglas Street, advised that everyone has a common objective of trying to make Vancouver more beautiful than it is, but the proposed Views Policy will not achieve this goal. Having been involved in three-dimensional computer modelling in regard to the establishment of the view corridors, it was found that slight variations in the view points yields substantially different results.

Mr. J. Lehto, Principal, Urban Design & Development Consulting Ltd., suggested Council should endeavour to establish a reasonable balance between views protection and economic impacts. The City does not revolve around a single dimension in regard to views. Mr. Lehto was specifically concerned regarding the view cone from the south shore of False Creek, which, if imposed, would represent cruel and unusual punishment on the downtown south. The only view points which should be considered are those which are reasonably elevated above grade.

Cont'd

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

Vancouver Views Study
Implementation: Summary Report (Cont'd)

Mr. M. Sakai, Urbanics Consultants Ltd., referred to that portion of the Consultant's study dealing with economic impacts, and suggested alternative calculations which result in an economic impact of $134.6 million as compared to the $26.2 million suggested by the Consultants. It is important for Council to have a strong understanding of the economic impacts of a Views Policy, and consideration should be given to ways of compensating property owners for these impacts.

Mr. C. Green, President, Richards Street Management Ltd., expressed concern that property owners were not given proper notification of this meeting to enable them to come forward and express their concerns. The proposed Interim Views Policy would have a significant impact on certain properties, and noted that the property at 1396 Richards Street, in which he has a part interest, would have the allowable height limit reduced from 300 feet to 120 feet by the proposed policy.

Mr. I. Beveridge, Executive Director, Building Owners and Managers Association of B.C, stated the view cones represent a significant financial impact on many properties, and the proposed Views Policy affects individual properties in different ways. It is considered the proposed Views Policy is equivalent to down-zoning and should not be proceeded with prior to the matter being considered at a Public Hearing. Property owners should be advised of the specific impact on their properties.

Mr. B. M. Davis, Director, Design and Construction, Campeau Corporation, cautioned Council that if the height restrictions are too severe it will add to the bulk of buildings, and will affect the architectural proportioning. The present negotiation process regarding heights should remain unchanged, or alternatively Council should set a broad range on heights.

Mrs. G. Young, Junior League of Vancouver, stated the Junior League has a long-standing policy of protecting views in Vancouver, and particularly in the downtown area. Council should proceed to adopt the Interim Views Policy as a means of protecting views.

Mr. D. Osborne, False Creek Community Association, suggested the downtown south lacks a comprehensive plan and is the major problem related to views. Mr. Osborne noted there were certain limitations to the Study. Other concerns expressed were that the public survey questions were poorly framed, the view points selected are already blocked in some cases and the impact study was limited. It was recommended that further view points be considered including Granville Island and False Creek east (Science World).

MOVED by Ald. Puil,
THAT recommendations A and B of the City Manager, as contained in his report dated October 27, 1989, and quoted below, be approved:

A. THAT Council approve as City policy on views protection the immediate measures outlined in this report for use in negotiating discretionary approvals, in processing rezonings and developing area plans.

B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Planning to report back on the necessary work program, schedule and resources to carry out the follow-up work outlined in the Manager's Report dated October 27, 1989.

- carried

(Aldermen Baker and Bellamy opposed)

Cont'd

DELEGATIONS (CONT'D)

Vancouver Views Study
Implementation: Summary Report (Cont'd)

MOVED by Ald. Puil,
THAT recommendation C of the City Manager, as contained in his report dated October 27, 1989, and quoted below, be approved:

C. THAT Council thank the study Steering Committee for their work, and discharge them.

- carried unanimously

MOVED by Ald. Owen (in amendment),
THAT the views from the south False Creek, as identified in Figure 3A attached to the Manager's report dated October 27, 1989, not form part of the City policy on views protection at this time pending a public information meeting and further information concerning their economic impact.

- LOST

(Aldermen Bellamy, Davies, Eriksen, Price, Puil, Rankin, Taylor, Wilking and the Mayor)

The motion to amend having lost, Alderman Puil's motions were then put and carried in accordance with the vote as recorded.

MOVED by Ald. Puil,
THAT the Director of Planning be instructed to advise affected property owners of the interim views policy and the process by which the development of this policy is to proceed.

- CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C.C. 66 MLH/80

CITY OF VANCOUVER

MEMORANDUM

From: CITY CLERK

Date: December 7, 1989

To: VANCOUVER CITY COUNCIL

Refer File: 8035-2

Subject: VANCOUVER VIEWS STUDY - IMPLEMENTATION

The attached Manager's Reports dated October 27, 1989, were widely circulated on November 9, 1989, noting that Council would be hearing delegations at its meeting on December 12, 1989.

The Director of Planning and various staff members will make a presentation.

The following will appear as delegations:

Mr. A. Hebert, Chairman, Vancouver City Planning Committee
Mr. D.R. Podmore, Executive Vice-President, VLC Properties
Mr. F. Musson, Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership
Mr. S. Ronin, President, Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood Association
Mr. R. Downey, Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board
Mr. J. Cox, Urban Development Institute Pacific Region
Mr. M. Huggins, 3342 West 12th Avenue
Mr. A.W. Everett, 2697 S.W. Marine Drive
Mr. J. Rogers, President, Downtown Vancouver Association
Mr. P. Merrick, Paul Merrick Architects Limited
Mr. R. Fasan, Project Architect, Aitken Wreglesworth Associates
Mr. W. Powell, 6131 Douglas Street
Mr. J. Lehto, Principal, Urban Design + Development Consulting Ltd.
Mr. M. Andreassen, Vice President & Sec. Treas., Downtown Toyota Centre
Mr. M. Sakai, Urbanics Consultants Ltd.
Mr. C. Green, President, Richards Street Management Ltd.

CITY CLERK

MLCross:pl
Att.

MANAGER'S REPORT

DATE October 27, 1989

TO: VANCOUVER CITY COUNCIL

SUBJECT: Vancouver Views Study -- Implementation: Summary Report

CLASSIFICATION: RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager, in consultation with the Director of Planning, under date of October 27, 1989, has submitted a report on the above subject. In summary, he states:

"**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to convey to Council the final report of the consultants on the Vancouver Views Study; to recommend a strategy for immediate protection of threatened views in the short term; to recommend that the Planning Department report back as soon as possible on the further work and resources necessary to implement the study recommendations; and to discharge the Steering Committee with Council's thanks.

BACKGROUND

In December City Council commissioned a team of consultants including Busby Bridger Architects, MTR Consultants Ltd., and Coriolis Consulting Corporation to undertake a study of the public views in the City, working in liaison with a steering committee appointed by Council and chaired by the City Manager. The study comprised a number of steps, and the final report #5 summarizes all phases and makes recommendations.

GENERAL POLICY

Action Needed

The study found, through public opinion poll, that most citizens enjoy the City's public views, particularly those of water and mountains; most feel we are losing some important ones as the Downtown develops; and most support stronger action to protect them. The study recommends that action be undertaken.

Staff recommend Council undertake some immediate measures to protect the threatened views through adoption of policy now, pending the necessary follow-up work for actual regulations. Protection through policy is feasible because the affected areas are either under discretionary height control (Downtown District) or are in the process of having new zonings developed (North Granville Slopes, Pacific Place). Immediate action through adoption of policy will allow negotiation on development permits and rezonings.

Follow-Up Work Towards Regulation Needed

Through examining practice in other North American cities, the consultant's study concluded that successful regulation usually involves the use of overlay zoning with detailed definitions of the protected view and viewpoint. The study recommends that views protection policies and procedures be consolidated. Significant follow-up work (including updating of the data base) is needed to achieve this. It is recommended that the Director of Planning prepare a report outlining the tasks, schedule, and resources necessary for follow-up work.

VIEWS WITH LESS IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED

The study, through the public opinion poll, identified 27 view locations as valued by citizens and categorized them into four groups:

- not threatened
- not threatened under existing zoning
- street-end views easily protected
- threatened views

The first two categories require no immediate measures--simply follow-up work to protect as necessary in future. As an immediate measure for the third category, street-end views, Council should instruct staff to require developments located in street alignment extensions to take into account the need to preserve water and mountain views, and report on any projects which threaten them. Follow-up action includes identifying these views more precisely for inclusion in eventual consolidated views policy.

VIEWS WITH IMMEDIATE POLICY ACTION RECOMMENDED

The study recognized 9 views which are threatened at the present time, and calculated the heights that would be necessary to protect these. While the study looked at protecting all existing views from these points, or lesser alternate views, public response at the public information meeting favoured the existing. Staff recommend that Council adopt an immediate strategy of protecting the existing views with the exceptions noted in the report, where alternates are more appropriate, or where they provide a 'fall back' position.

Economic Impacts

As part of the study an assessment of the private economic impacts of protecting the 9 threatened views was done. The study found that the imposition of height limits would impact a relatively small portion of the study area, with the principal impacts being site planning and design constraints on Pacific Place and Granville Slopes due to the Granville Bridge and South False Creek view cones. As will be noted below, there are a number of alternatives available which will reduce even these impacts.

5 Views with Little Impact

The study identifies 5 views for which the study's view cones 'as is' can provide the basis for height control. (#3 Queen Elizabeth Park, #9 Cambie St. at 11th, #20 South Granville at Broadway, #21 Commercial at 15th, and #27 Trout Lake).

Staff notes that Pacific Place is able to accommodate these views and the False Creek North ODP has been drafted to include them. A number of other sites potentially impacted by views #3 and #9 are described in the main report, but negotiation to achieve compliance seems feasible. The immediate measure of adopting preservation of these 5 views as Council policy is proposed to guide negotiation of DP's and rezonings, with appropriate follow-up work to develop regulations.

View #10 from Granville Island

The study recommends the adoption of the alternate cone from this point, and staff concurs. The immediate measure required is adoption of the view cone as policy, with follow-up work to develop regulations.

View # 12 from Granville Bridge

The study examined several viewpoints from Granville Bridge, but concludes that further study is necessary. However, waiting for further study could well result in the loss of the remaining view from the bridge span itself.

Staff have calculated that the portion of the view cone remaining to the west can be preserved without undue impacts. For the other cone, directly north along the street alignment, it is feasible to preserve the view of the mountain ridge, although the view of the Vancouver Block clock may be lost to development on a site immediately to the south of it.

Interim measures recommended are the adoption of a revised set of view cones. Follow-up work includes further investigation of the dynamic view sequence on Granville Bridge, and development of appropriate regulations.

View #22 from Main St. to Mountains

The study recommends that further analysis is needed from viewpoints on Main Street. To be on the safe side with regard to possible development proposals in the east False Creek area and adjacent industrial areas, Council should adopt the study cone as immediate policy and alter it as necessary in follow-up work.

View # 19 from South Shore of False Creek

The full report contains an extended discussion of the possible actions on the public views from the South Shore of False Creek. This can only be highlighted here.

There are three possible approaches to these views--no view protection; protection of selected cones or corridors; and protection of most of the existing mountain ridge from a linear corridor along the shore. The study, previous planning work, and the current staff proposal all work within the second of these approaches. The third would involve the protection of cones from many more points, involving lowering heights in Pacific Place and Downtown South to 100 to 150 ft., with the consequent loss of housing units.

The study examined the preservation of a three-part cone from a single point (#19) on the seawall, at Charleson Park bay. It concluded that a single stationary point should not be preserved at this time, but that further work was needed in conjunction with planning for Pacific Place.

Staff, noting (after the progress report in June) that a significant portion of the view from #19 is already blocked by approved development, developed an alternative approach to preserve views through Pacific Place which was being negotiated simultaneously. This approach involved the preservation of narrow corridors from 4 public locations on the south shore. Staff estimated that, because the corridors overlap, the impact on the Downtown South area is no worse than with the viewpoint #19 cones, and the potential impact on Pacific Place much less.

The Pacific Place proposal has been altered over the past few months to preserve these cones, and these are now reflected in the draft North False Creek ODP. The decision of whether or not these corridors are to be continued through the Downtown is necessary. To decide not to do so would mean no guarantee of views to mountains from the south shore.

Staff recommends as an interim measure the adoption of the alternate package of view corridors from the south shore for use in negotiation and further area planning work, with follow-up work to develop regulations as required.

ADDITIONAL VIEWS

The study notes the need to allow for additional views to be added, and for regular review. Two views that were mentioned at the public information meeting were those from Cambie Bridge and from 8th and Discovery.

Views from Cambie Bridge

Staff recommends preservation of 2 cones from Cambie bridge to the mountains over North Park and the north eastern part of the CBD. The Pacific Place proposal complies with these cones, and otherwise the DD heights are not affected. The immediate measure would be adoption as policy by Council, with follow-up work to develop regulations.

8th and Discovery

This view is not threatened for now, and immediate measures are simply to instruct staff to require view analysis in any area planning that takes place on the Jericho site.

OTHER FOLLOW UP WORK ITEMS

The main report lists a number of other work items which must be undertaken towards implementation, in addition to the items noted in the individual view categories, and notes that the Director of Planning will report back on these.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS:

A. THAT Council approve as City policy on views protection the immediate measures outlined in this report for use in negotiating discretionary approvals, in processing rezonings and developing area plans.

B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Planning to report back on the necessary work program, schedule and resources to carry out the follow-up work outlined in this report.

C. THAT Council thank the study Steering Committee for their work, and discharge them. "

MANAGER'S REPORT DATE: 1989 10 27

TO: Vancouver City Council

SUBJECT: Vancouver Views Study -- Implementation

CLASSIFICATION: RECOMMENDATION

The City Manager, in consultation with the Director of Planning, reports as follows:

"PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to convey to Council the final report of the consultants on the Vancouver Views Study; to recommend a strategy for immediate protection of threatened views in the short term; to recommend that the Planning Department report back as soon as possible on the further work and resources necessary to implement the study recommendations; and to discharge the Steering Committee with Council's thanks.

BACKGROUND

In December 1988 City Council commissioned a team of consultants including Busby Bridger Architects, MTR Consultants Ltd. and Coriolis Consulting Corporation to undertake a views study for the City of Vancouver. The consultants worked closely with a steering committee appointed by Council and chaired by the City Manager, with representatives from Planning, Properties, the public and the Development Industry. (Refer to Appendix A)

The consultants' work dealt specifically with public views, rather than private ones. The work included:

- a public opinion survey which tested citizens' attitudes and elicited locations of valued views;

- research on view preservation in other North American cities;

- physical view cone analysis on the 27 important view locations identified by the opinion survey (Fig. 1) including categorization by level of threat and calculation of heights necessary to preserve key threatened view cones; development of a combined height limits map (Figure 2 a and 2b);

- a Council workshop (June 22,1989) and public information meeting (July 24, 1989);

- assessment of economic impacts of height limits to protect nine view cones considered threatened at the present time,

A series of reports have been submitted by the consultants during the course of the work. The final Report #5 summarizes all phases of the study and makes recommendations. These are reproduced in Appendix B. This report deals with both short-term and long-term implementation of these recommendations, which are referred to below as "VVS Rec#".

GENERAL POLICY

Action Needed

The study found, through the public opinion poll, that while a large array of specific views was identified, most respondents (71%) particularly enjoy views of the North Shore mountains and/or water, as well as the downtown skyline. Most respondents (76%) agreed with the statement that 'As Downtown develops, we seem to be losing some important views of the mountains and water' and 86% agreed that 'the

City should take stronger action to protect views, even if it requires significant restrictions on new development.'

The study therefore recommends (VVS Rec 8.1) that action should be undertaken. The study recommendations for specific views are outlined below, together with staff recommendations on implementation.

In general, staff recommend that Council undertake some immediate measures to protect threatened views through the adoption of policy. While ultimately--after the necessary follow-up work--regulations should be adopted, action is needed now to provide clear direction for negotiation of development permits and site-specific rezonings in the CBD and Downtown South, as well as for upcoming area plans and rezonings for Downtown South, North Granville Slopes, and Pacific Place. If policy is not adopted, many views could be lost before the follow-up implementation work is complete.

The approach of protecting views through policy (rather than regulation) is feasible on an interim basis because the main area involved is the Downtown District, where all development approval is discretionary. Even though height limits are described, the City is not obligated to approve these and is in a position to negotiate. (Sites which might be seriously affected by height limits are described below under the specific views.)

The other major areas affected are Pacific Place and North Granville Slopes, where Council is in the process of reviewing new area plans and zonings. Since mid-June, when the consultants presented their progress report to Council and noted which views they deemed threatened, staff has included consideration of the possible view cones in the planning process.

Follow-up Work Towards Regulation Needed

The study examined view protection measures in 27 other North American cities and noted that the most successful protection measures appear to be those that provide detailed definitions of the protected view and viewpoint, with an 'overlay' height zoning being the most common means of embodying the regulations. The study recommends (VVS Rec 8.2) that views protection policies and procedures be consolidated. Staff concur with these findings.

In order to do this, significant follow-up work is required, including updating the data base (current as of March 1988) to reflect projects built or approved; refining the view cones as necessary; developing submission standards and procedures; reviewing and incorporating view protection measures already existing; and developing an appropriate public input and view policy updating process.

It is therefore recommended that the Director of Planning prepare a report outlining the tasks, schedule, and resources necessary for this follow-up work for Council's consideration as soon as possible.

(Figure 3 illustrates the implementation stages towards a consolidated City views policy.)

VIEWS WITH LESS IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED

The consultants organize the 27 view locations into four categories:

- not threatened
- not threatened under existing zoning
- street-end views easily protected
- threatened views

The first three require little immediate action, and are considered in this section.

Not-Threatened Views (VVS Rec 8.3)

This category includes 8 views mainly from water, parks and mountains which are not threatened and are very unlikely to be. (Locations numbered 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 16, 18, and 25 in Fig. 1)

Immediate measures:

- none required

Follow up:

- recognize in eventual policy and protect as necessary in future development

Not Threatened Under Existing Zoning (VVS Rec 8.4)

These are views which the study categorizes as not threatened under existing zoning. (Locations numbered 7, 14, 15, 24, 26 in Fig. 1) However, they may be affected if there is significant rezoning of land around them.

Immediate measures:

- none required

Follow up:

- recognize and include in eventual policy to allow protection in future area plans and rezonings

Street End Views (VVS Rec 8.5)

The street ends identified by the consultants are those throughout the west side of the city towards the north; in Downtown towards the north; and in the West End towards the south, west, and north. The consultants note these street-end views as 'easy to protect'. (Locations numbered 8, 11, 13, 17, 23 in Fig.1)

Where streets end in park, as at English Bay, protection is not necessary. Where they end on Port lands or privately-owned lands, protection measures are necessary. Some downtown street-ends are already protected in the existing Central Waterfront District zoning, and ongoing planning for Coal Harbour project continues to address these. The proposed False Creek North ODP provides for continuation of views from the street-ends which it affects.

Staff notes that street ends with views of water and mountains are undoubtedly more numerous than those specifically identified through the public opinion survey. In addition, many of these street views are actually 'corridor views' which are experienced dynamically with significant views at a number of points. The Granville Street approach from the Airport is a familiar example with water and mountain views opening at various points along its length. Where these corridors jog, there is the possibility of view blockage. The seniors' tower located at Commercial and Adanac is an example. Staff recommends that follow-up work examine what protection may be necessary for any additional street-end and street-corridor views.

Immediate measures:

- instruct staff to require developments located in street alignment extensions to take into account the need to preserve water and mountain views
- report to Council any DPA's or rezonings which threaten these

Follow-up:

- identify more precisely the street-end and street-corridor views
- develop protection principles and policies

VIEWS WITH IMMEDIATE POLICY ACTION RECOMMENDED

The study recognizes 9 views which are threatened at the present time (VVS Rec #8.6). For these views the height limits that would be necessary to maintain existing views of mountains and water were calculated and maps developed which illustrate the combined height control cones. (VVS maps D1.1 and 1.2 shown in Fig. 2a and 2b)

In addition, alternative cones protecting less view were calculated for each point. The consultants note that responses from the public information meeting favoured maintaining the existing views rather than the alternates. In one case the consultants recommend the alternate views be preserved, but otherwise the recommendations are silent on whether it is the existing or alternate views which should be kept.

Because of the public response, and because of the danger of losing views to development in the short term, staff recommends that Council adopt an immediate strategy of protecting the existing views, with the exceptions noted below where alternates are more appropriate or where they provide a 'fall back' position.

The study recommendations break the 9 views into sub-categories, and this format is followed below (after a summary of the consultants' economic impacts study). For each sub-category the study recommendation is outlined, followed by staff comments; reference to some specific sites which might be impacted by proposed height limits; proposed immediate measures; and follow-up actions. Diagrams have been prepared to illustrate the discussion as required.

Economic Impacts

Report #4 of the consultant study contains an assessment of the private economic impacts of protecting the 9 threatened views. The study found that the imposition of height limits would impact a relatively small portion of the study area, with the principal impacts being site planning and design constraints on Pacific Place and Granville Slopes, due to the Granville Bridge and South False Creek view cones.

Estimates of the total reduction in land value overall sites ranged from a low of $ 3.2 million to a high of $26.2 million. No quantitative estimates were made for impacts on Pacific Place and North Granville Slopes, since zoning there was still in flux.

It should be noted that these figures assume the more severe height limits required for protection of existing views rather than alternate views, and include the view cone #19 from the south shore of False Creek. As will be noted below, there are a number of alternatives available which will reduce these impacts.

5 Views with Little Impact

The study identifies 5 views for which the view cones 'as is' can provide the basis for height control. These are:

#3 from Queen Elizabeth Park
#9 from Cambie Corridor to Downtown (at 11th)
#20 from S. Granville Corridor to Downtown (at Broadway)
#21 from Commercial Drive north to mountains (at 15th)
#27 from Trout Lake to mountains

The consultant recommendations note that these do not impose significant constraints on development activity.

Pacific Place massing is able to accommodate these views and the False Creek North ODP has been drafted to include them.

Council should note that views #3 and #9 necessitate heights lower than those described in the DD on some developable sites downtown (see Fig. 4). While the maximum FSR is achievable, applicants may resist lowering their heights. Of particular significance in this regard are:

- 1100 Block W. Georgia south side, in the 450 ft. zone of the DD. The heights to maintain the existing cone identified by the study from Queen Elizabeth park would be about 300 ft. While the FSR 9 could be accommodated on this large site at this height, the applicant is likely to seek more. A building of up to 400 feet would meet the alternative view cone standards for Queen Elizabeth view (keeping plenty of mountain view) and would also meet the standards for the view from Cambie and 11th.

- the north portion of the Hudson's Bay block, in the 450 ft zone of the DD. A tower anywhere on the site would only be allowed to reach 90 m. (295 ft.) to preserve the existing cone from Cambie and 11th. A previous DPA (now lapsed) involving preservation of the heritage building on the corner of Dunsmuir and Granville included a tower of 450 ft. on the Seymour side of the site. Lowering the height to 300 ft. would be feasible, but might compromise the tower form and heritage building retention.

- 800 Hamilton St. A preliminary development permit has been approved for two towers of 33 storeys (300 ft), each which would exceed the limits by about 70 ft. each. It is possible for this form of development to be renegotiated at the complete DP stage.

Immediate measures:

- adopt preservation of existing view cones as Council policy
- instruct staff to negotiate any development permit applications to best possible conformity with views. Possibilities include conformity to lesser, alternative view cone limits proposed by consultant.
- in event agreement cannot be reached with applicant, report to Council for decision
- utilize policy in developing height limits for new zoning for Downtown South and other affected areas.

Follow-up:

- refine view cones
- develop overlay height regulations and any consequent zoning changes (including any necessary density changes) for referral to public hearing

<u>View #10 from Granville Island to Downtown</u>

The study recommends that the alternative view cone be adopted. (See fig.5 for the alternative cone from this point.) Staff supports this recommendation, since the portion of the existing view cone which would be dropped will be blocked by approved development at Pacific and Burrard. The view cone extends over the West End but since the height limits are above the outright heights allowed under the WED ODP there is no loss of development potential.

Immediate measures:

- adopt preservation of alternate view cone as Council policy
- instruct staff to use policy in processing DP applications.

Follow-up:

- refine view cones
- develop overlay height regulations for referral to public hearing

View #12 from Granville Bridge to Mountains

The study examined views from 2 points (12.1 and 12.2) on the span itself, looking north/west. As calculated, these would have effects on North Granville Slopes as well as on some sites west of Burrard. The consultants recommend that further study is necessary for this area, to incorporate recent DP approvals and rezonings, as well as to deal with the dynamic aspect of the views.

Parts of the cones diagrammed in the study have already been blocked by rezonings and DP's approved since the date of the study's data base (including the Korion site development). However, staff has calculated that it is feasible to protect most of the remaining cone from points on the Granville Bridge span (Fig. 6) This alternative would restrict one or two towers in North Granville Slopes to 150-160 ft., and would be generally met by the developments under consideration on Burrard St. During the consultant study of North Granville Slopes, the possible preservation of this cone was assumed, and a density of FSR 4 was still found to be possible on the sites affected.

The other view considered from Granville Bridge is the corridor directly along the Granville Street alignment (#12.3) to both the mountains and the landmark Vancouver Block clock. Major sites which would be affected are:

- a site at Granville between Georgia and Robson, where the DD allows 450 ft. and FSR of 9. Based on detailed staff calculations for this site, preservation of the clock view would require a height of only 210 ft., while preserving the mountain range would involve a limit of about 280 ft. A preliminary development permit has been approved in principle, but the applicant has been asked to lower the height significantly to respect the views of the mountains. Heights of 19 to 24 storeys (230 to 290 ft) are being discussed.

- a site on the north end of the Hudson's Bay block in the 450 ft. zone of the DD. If the view cone preserves only the mountain line, a height of about 315 feet is feasible. This would have the same impacts as described earlier for this site.

Immediate measures:

- adopt as policy a revised set of view cones as per fig.7 which will preserve remaining views from the bridge span to the north and west, and the mountain line as seen directly down the street corridor.
- instruct staff to negotiate any development permit applications to best possible conformity with views
- if agreement is not reached with applicant, report to Council for decision
- utilize policy in developing height limits for new zoning for Downtown South, Granville Slopes, and other affected areas.

Follow-up:

- refine view cone
- examine dynamic view sequence across Granville Bridge and develop further principles and policies as necessary
- develop overlay height regulations and any consequent zoning changes for referral to public hearing

View #22 from Main St. to Mountains

Council has already adopted guidelines for narrower 'corridor views' at points along Main St. with the FC-1 zoning. These are respected by the recently-approved Bosa development. However, it does protrude above the wide view cone identified by the study from a point at Main and 6th. This was brought to Council's attention in the report on the rezoning. It was felt that an alternative view configuration would provide an equally good view experience. The study recommends that further analysis is needed from viewpoints on Main Street.

To be on the safe side, with regard to possible development proposals in the rest of east False Creek and adjacent industrial areas, Council could adopt the study cone as policy and alter it as necessary in follow-up work.

Immediate measures:

- adopt preservation of study view cone as Council policy
- report to Council any DPA's or rezonings which threaten the cone

Follow-up:

- identify more precisely the view cones for preservation along Main St.
- develop protection principles and policies

View #19 from South Shore of False Creek

General Approaches

Conceptually there are three approaches for protection of mountain views from the south shore:

- no view protection at all. This is the current situation.

- protection of selected cones or corridors. This is the approach examined by the study, by previous Planning Department work, and by the staff proposal below.

- protection of most of the existing mountain ridge view from a linear corridor along the shore. To do this would require the protection of cones from many more points along the seawall, involving lowering of heights in Pacific Place and the Downtown South to 100 to 150 feet in most areas. This would result in the loss of a large number of housing units.

Study Recommendation

The views from the south shore of False Creek were identified in the public survey as one of the 27 important view locations . The consultant together with the Steering Committee selected a single viewpoint on the seawall, at the centre of the Charleson Park bay, for evaluation. The existing view from this point is a three part cone. (Fig. 7)

Staff notes that the westerly part of the cone has been substantially blocked by approved development along Howe St. and the easterly one interrupted by approved towers in International Village. These do not appear in the study's data base, and so could not be taken into account during the selection and evaluation of the view point.

On Fig. 7, staff have illustrated the hypothetical towers locations that would be affected by significant height limitations, if the cones from viewpoint # 19 were preserved. There are 21 in Downtown South and 16 in Pacific Place. (These are based on the general rule of four towers per block within the Downtown South, excluding sites

already developed. In Pacific Place location of towers are as currently proposed.) A height limit that would require a tower to be below 200 ft. was taken as a significant. While in many locations in Downtown South it has been shown that full density development is possible at 175 ft., most of the affected locations would require lower limits.

The consultant study's final recommendations note that no specific view 'icon' needs protection but that the general image of the city core against a mountain ridgeline needs to be maintained. It is noted that the single stationary point as originally selected by the study probably does not match the public's expectations. The economic study notes this is one of the views having the most impact. The constraints that would be placed on Pacific Place would be most serious. The consultant study therefore recommends that viewpoint #19 be deleted pending more analysis in conjunction with the Pacific Place proposals.

Staff Alternate

In the past two months, it became evident that the preservation of view cones from the single point was not going to work, but that some alternative approach would be needed to preserve views through Pacific Place, which was being negotiated simultaneously. Staff developed an alternative, illustrated in Fig. 8. Four locations on the south shore were selected because of their higher degree of public usage:

a. Alder Terrace
b. Charleson Park bay (the same point as VVS#19)
c. Laurel landbridge
d. Leg-in-Boot Square

From these points, corridors were defined which would protect relatively narrow slices of mountain ridge, giving preference to landmarks such as the Lions and Crown/Grouse mountain. These corridors would ensure some public views to mountains from some locations, to which will be added those which simply survive by chance. This does not guarantee preservation of major portions of the ridgeline from this linear area, nor does it deal with the desires of False Creek residents to preserve their private views of the mountains.

The potential impact of preserving these alternate corridors is shown in fig 8. As can be seen, because many of the corridors overlap, the number of potential tower sites in the Downtown South with height limits under 200 feet is still 21.

Pacific Place has adjusted their illustrative massing to accommodate these cones, and they are reflected in the draft ODP. The decision of whether or not these corridors are to be continued through the Downtown is necessary. To decide not to do so would mean the protection of no public views from the South Shore.

Immediate measures:

- adopt the staff alternate package of view corridors from the South Shore of False Creek as Council policy
- instruct staff to negotiate any development permit applications to best possible conformity with views.
- in event agreement cannot be reached with applicant, report to Council for decision
- utilize policy in developing height limits for new zoning for Downtown South and other affected areas.

Follow-up:

- refine view cones
- develop overlay height regulations and any consequent zoning changes (including any necessary adjustments to density) for referral to public hearing

ADDITIONAL VIEWS (VVS Rec 8.8)

The study notes that a procedure for regular review of the views policy is needed, and that a number of views that were not identified during the public opinion telephone survey, but were brought up at the public information meeting, might be candidates for the first update. The study does not recommend any particular timing for these.

Views from Cambie Bridge

Staff considers the view from Cambie Bridge, which was raised at the public information meeting, to be an important one to deal with at this time, and one which has few impacts.

There are two remaining cones with mountain views (Fig. 8). The one from the south half of the span over North Park will be the only mountain view left on the east side of the downtown skyline when development encircles the east end of False Creek. The second, northward along the bridge and over the Stadium, preserves a fairly large arc of mountain ridge, including Crown and Seymour mountains. Both of these are important to the overall impression of a downtown skyline with mountain backdrop on either side.

Pacific Place's illustrative massing allows both these view cones to be preserved, and they are included in the draft False Creek North ODP. Development in the B.C. Place Stadium site would be affected and would have to be limited in height. As yet no specific development proposals have been made, and this area is not dealt with in the North False Creek ODP.

While the northerly cone does not require heights lower than those now described in the DD, in some cases relaxations to those heights have been sought. So far none exceed the limits. The proposed hotel/TD bank restoration on the block bounded by Seymour, Hastings, Richards and Pender would be limited to 310 ft. The current height being discussed is 330 ft., and there is probably room for negotiation.

Immediate measures:

- adopt the proposed cones as Council policy
- instruct staff to negotiate any development permit applications to best possible conformity with views.
- in event agreement cannot be reached with applicant, report to Council for decision

Follow-up:

- refine view cones
- develop overlay height regulations and any consequent zoning changes (including any necessary density changes) for referral to public hearing

Views from 8th and Discovery (Pt. Grey Park)

This was another view mentioned at the public information meeting. Although not analyzed by the study, and probably not immediately threatened, this view would be sensitive to any future development on the Jericho site.

Immediate measure:

- instruct staff to require view analysis of in any area planning or rezoning proposals that would affect this view

Follow-up:

- analyze view for inclusion in 'Not threatened for now' views.

OTHER FOLLOW UP WORK ITEMS

The consultants and staff identify a number of other work items which must be undertaken towards implementation, in addition to the items noted above as follow-up work:

- production of hand-out on adopted Council policy for use by staff and public, including standards and procedure for applicant view analysis and submission

- update of data base to reflect projects built or approved since March 1988

- development of appropriate format for views policies, regulations and guidelines

- research and recommendation regarding ongoing data base

- development of process for views policy update, public information and nomination of new views by public

A detailed work program will be the subject of a report back to Council by the Director of Planning."

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Manager recommends:

A. THAT Council approve as City policy on views protection the immediate measures outlined in this report for use in negotiating discretionary approvals, in processing rezonings and developing area plans.

B. THAT Council instruct the Director of Planning to report back on the necessary work program, schedule and resources to carry out the follow-up work outlined in this report

C. THAT Council thank the study Steering Committee for their work, and discharge them.

FIGURE 1
27 VIEW LOCATIONS (V.V.S.)

VANCOUVER VIEW STUDY
MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BUILDING HEIGHTS TO PRESERVE EXISTING VIEW CONES
PARTIAL PLAN
1:15000
D 1.1
REVISION #1 EXCLUSION OF VIEW CONE #19 (FALSE CREEK SOUTH) 1988.09.23

FIGURE 2a

COMBINED BUILDING HEIGHTS FOR THREATENED VIEWS (V.V.S.)
(excluding view #19)

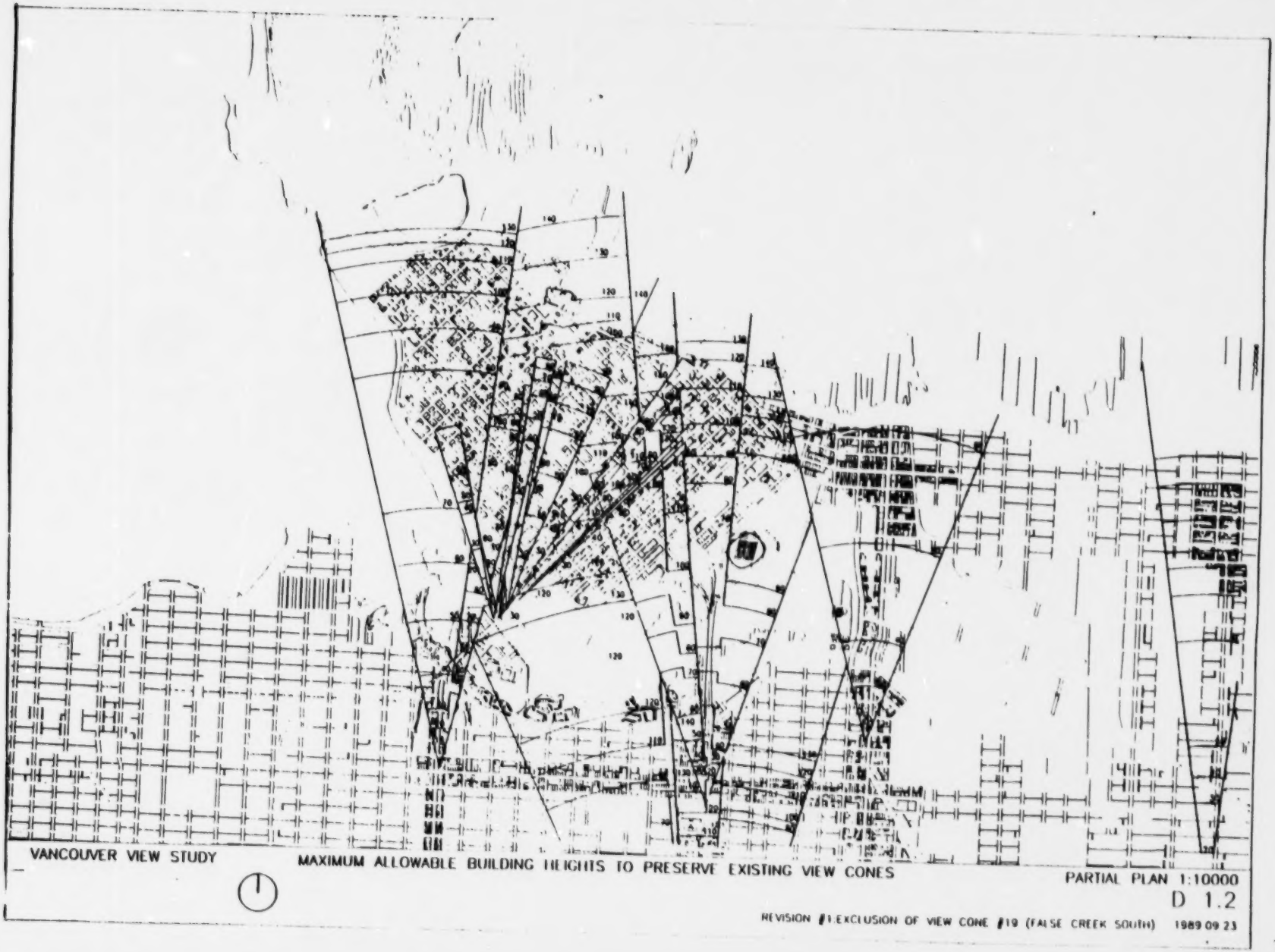

VANCOUVER VIEW STUDY
MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE BUILDING HEIGHTS TO PRESERVE EXISTING VIEW CONES
PARTIAL PLAN 1:10000
D 1.2
REVISION #1:EXCLUSION OF VIEW CONE #19 (FALSE CREEK SOUTH) 1989 09 23

FIGURE 2b
DETAIL OF FIG. 2a

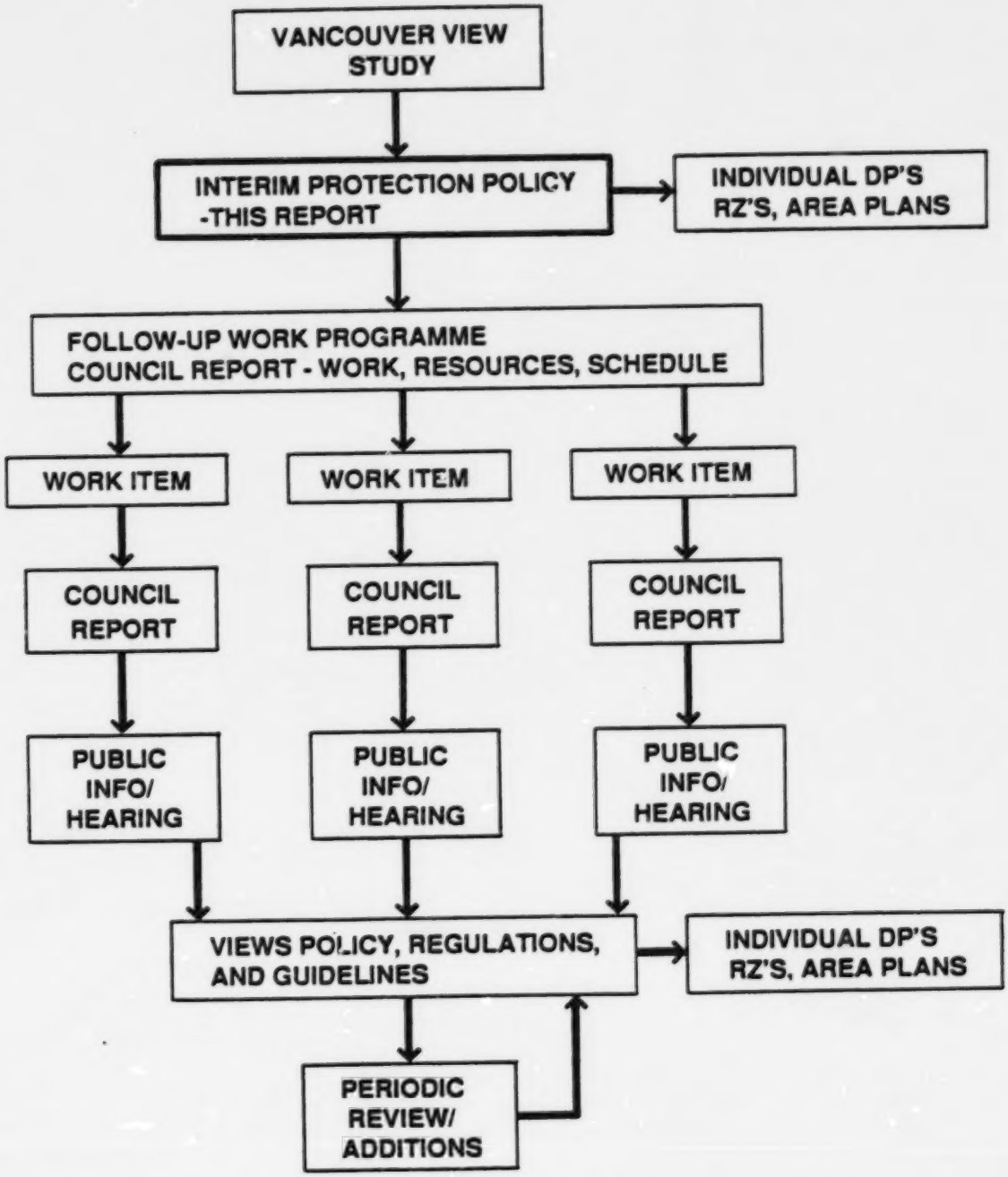


FIGURE 3

PROCESS TOWARDS CONSOLIDATED CITY VIEWS POLICY

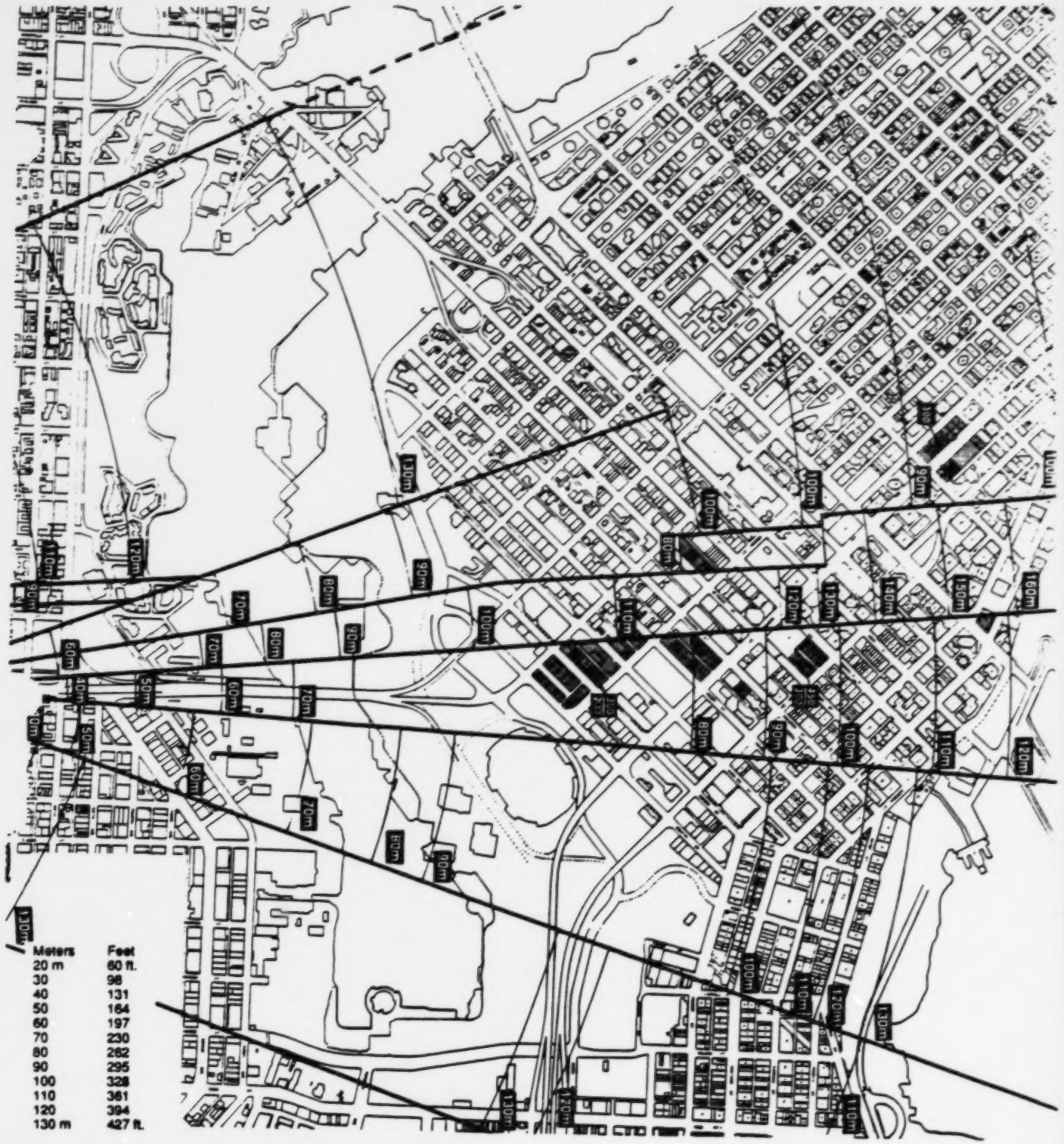


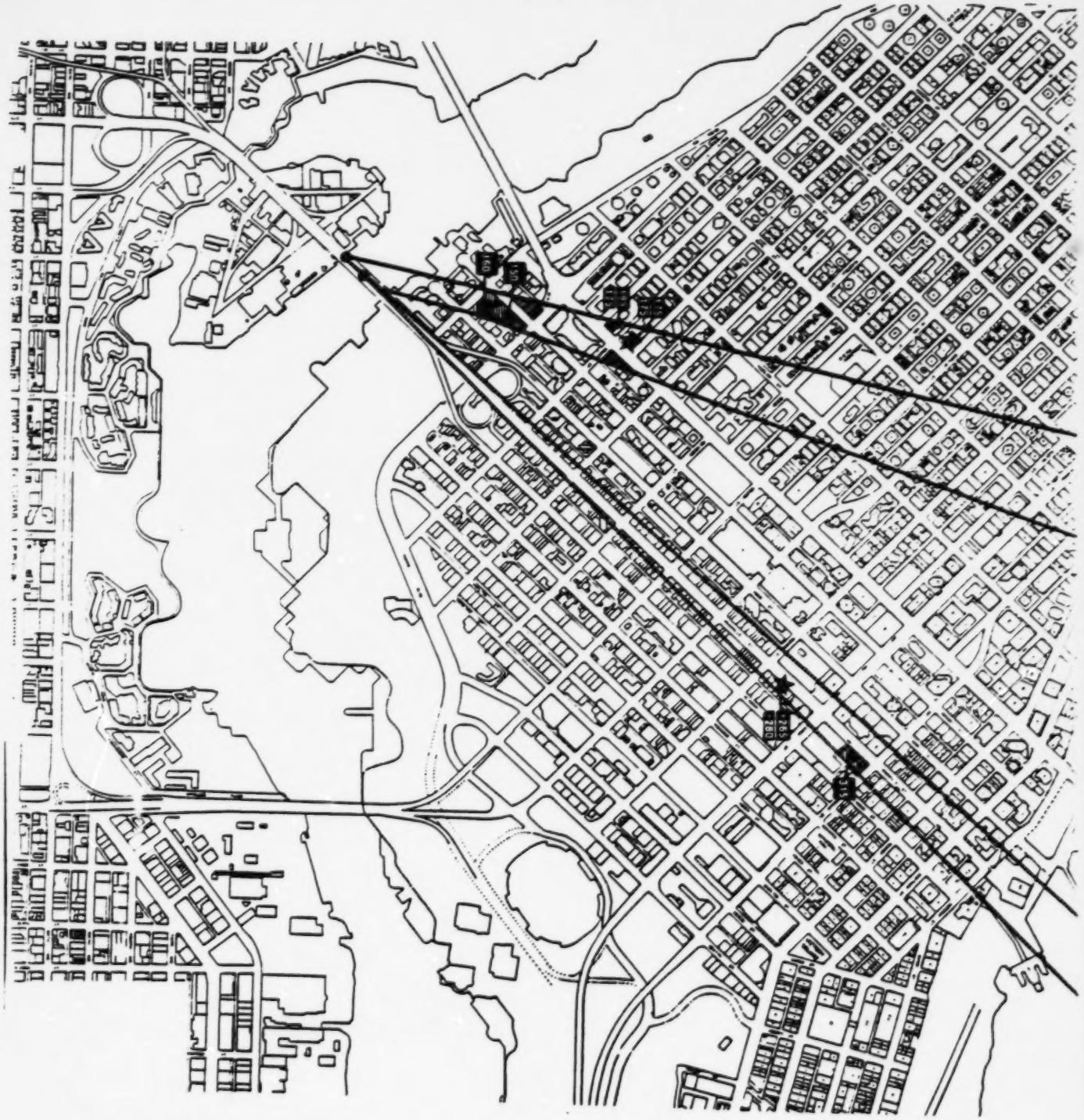
FIGURE 4

VIEW #3 QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK & VIEW #9 CAMBIE ST.

FIGURE 5

VIEW #10 GRANVILLE ISLAND

Existing and Alternate View cones



VIEW CONE TO BE PRESERVED
(See notations beside hypothetical tower sites for heights allowed in feet)

IMPACT AREAS
(Developable sites with impacts as per W/S economic impact study)

DP/RZ APPROVED FOR TOWER HIGHER THAN LIMIT
(Figures indicate proposed height and limit in feet)

DP/RZ IN PROCESS FOR TOWER HIGHER THAN LIMIT

DP/RZ APPROVED OR IN PROCESS BELOW HEIGHT LIMIT

HYPOTHETICAL TOWER LOCATION AFFECTED BY LIMIT
(shown in feet)

FIGURE 6

VIEW #12 GRANVILLE BRIDGE
Proposed by staff for adoption by Council policy-impacts

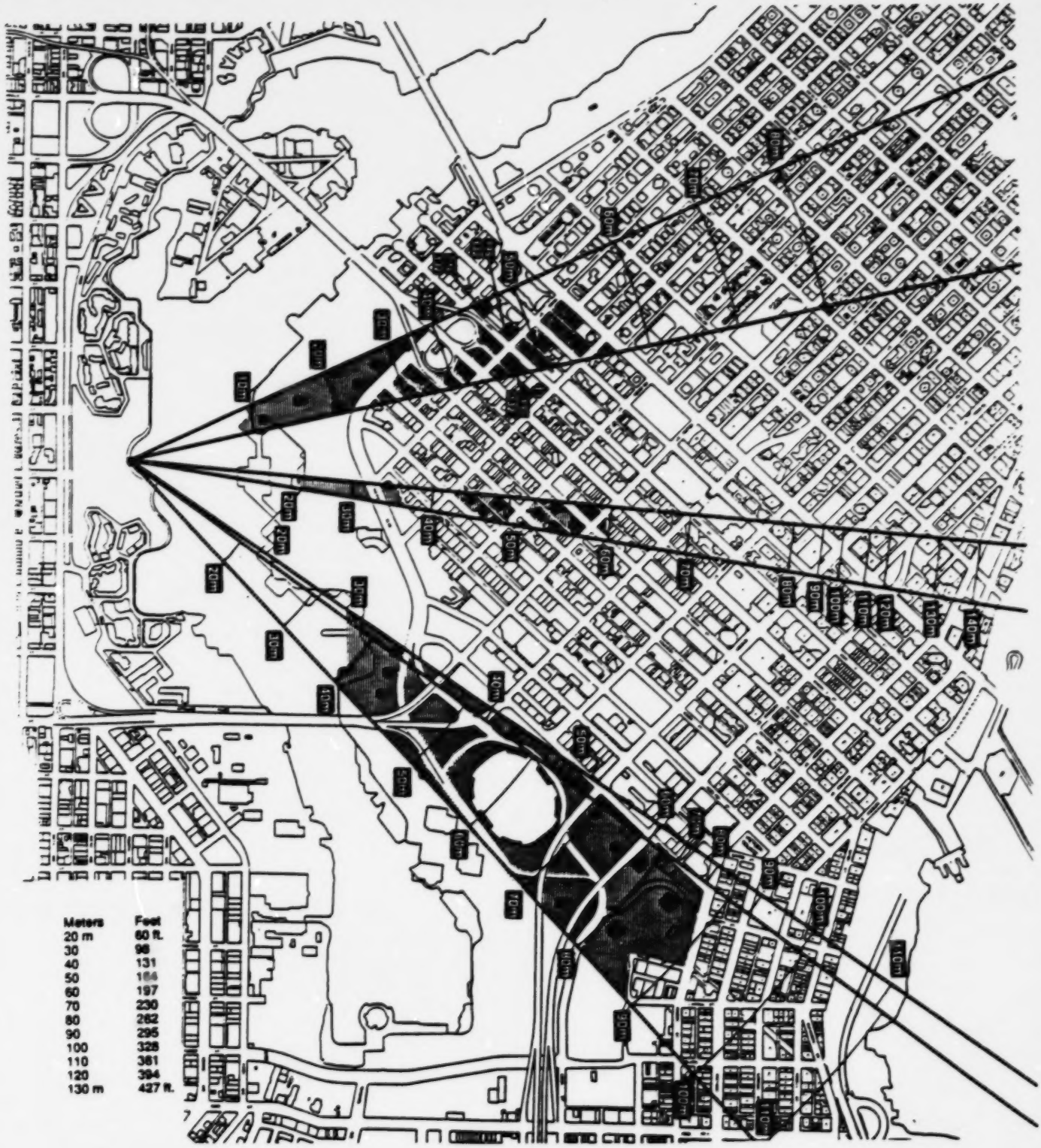
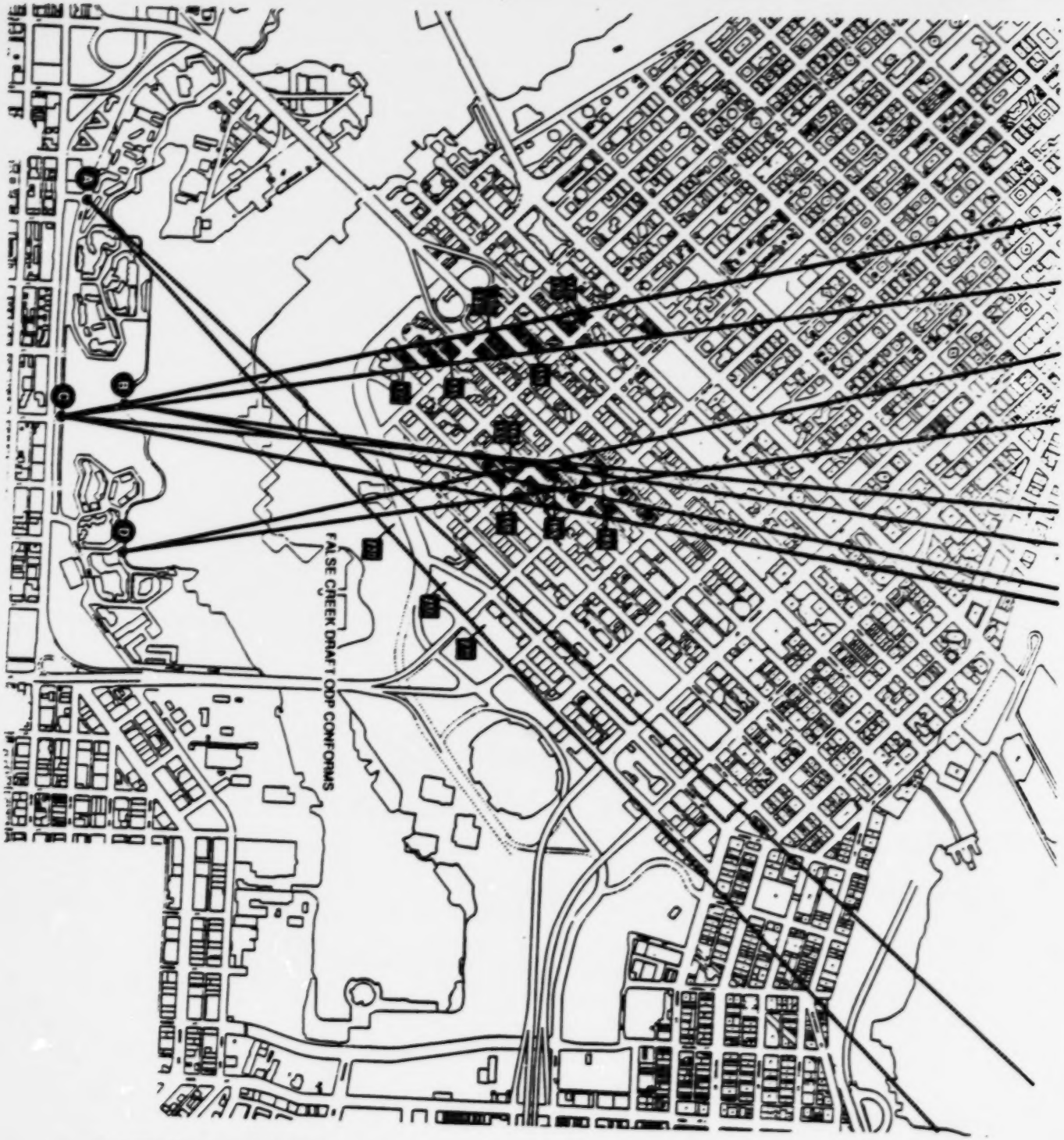


FIGURE 7

VIEW #19 SOUTH FALSE CREEK
View point examined by Vancouver Views Study-impacts



VIEW CONE TO BE PRESERVED
(See notations beside hypothetical tower sites for heights allowed in feet)

IMPACT AREAS
(Developable sites with impacts as per VVS economic impact study)

DP/RZ APPROVED FOR TOWER HIGHER THAN LIMIT
(Figures indicate proposed height and limit in feet)

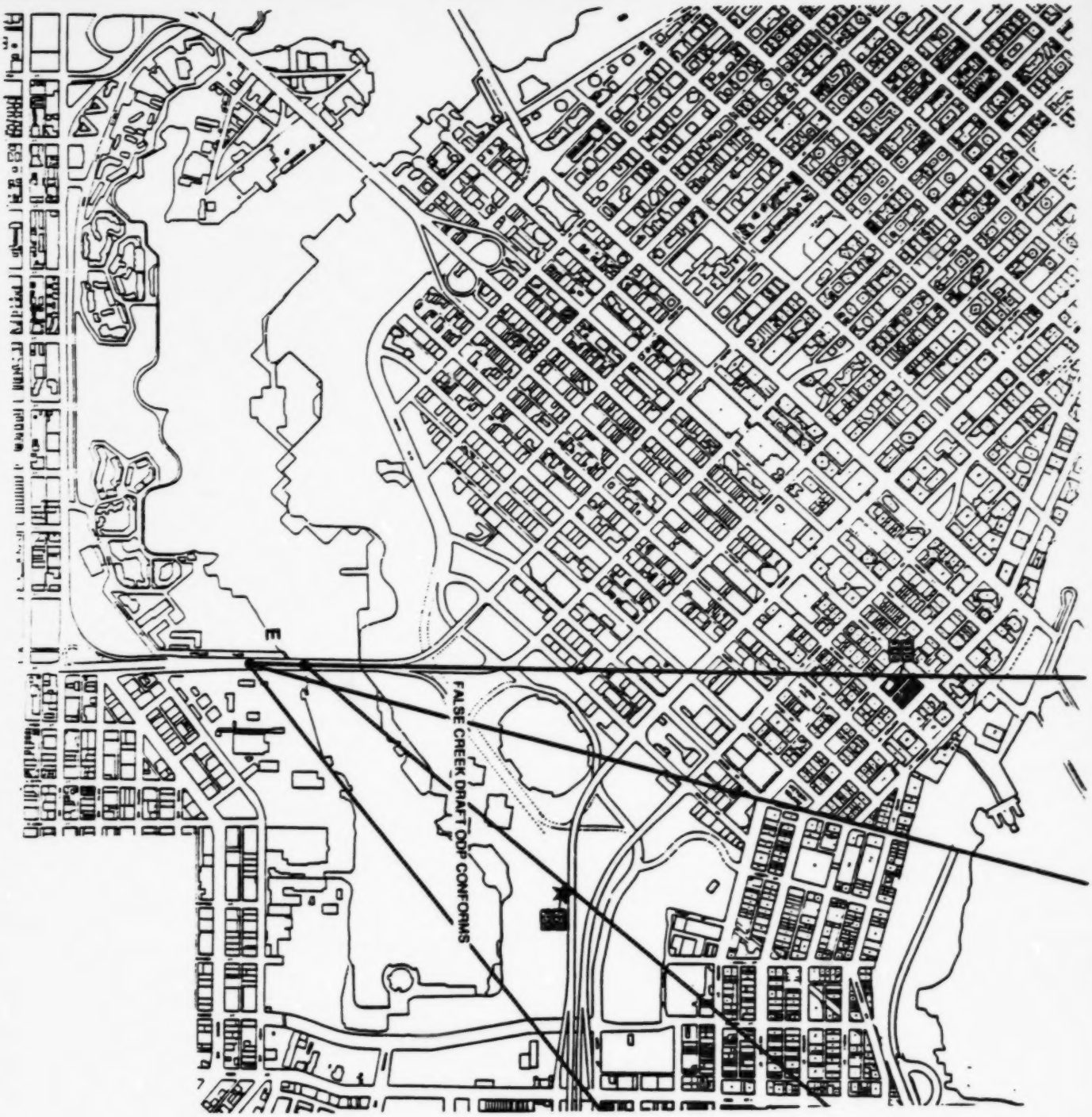
DP/RZ IN PROCESS FOR TOWER HIGHER THAN LIMIT

DP/RZ APPROVED OR IN PROCESS BELOW HEIGHT LIMIT

HYPOTHETICAL TOWER LOCATION AFFECTED BY LIMIT
(shown in feet)

FIGURE 8a

VIEWS A,B,C,D SOUTH FALSE CREEK
Proposed by staff for adoption by Council policy-impacts



VIEW CONE TO BE PRESERVED
(See notations beside hypothetical tower sites for heights allowed in feet)

IMPACT AREAS
(Developable sites with impacts as per VVS economic impact study)

DP/RZ APPROVED FOR TOWER HIGHER THAN LIMIT
(Figures indicate proposed height and limit in feet)

DP/RZ IN PROCESS FOR TOWER HIGHER THAN LIMIT

DP/RZ APPROVED OR IN PROCESS BELOW HEIGHT LIMIT

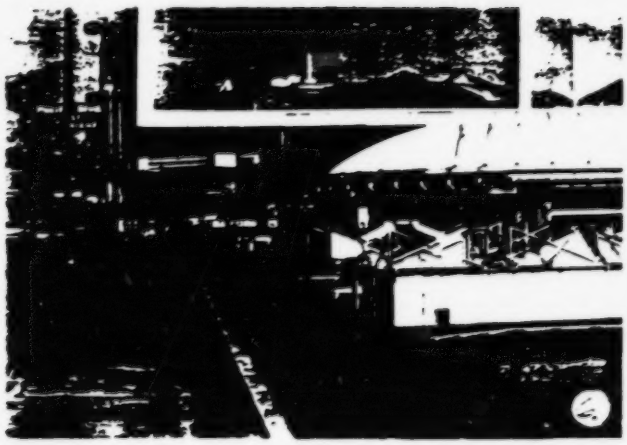
HYPOTHETICAL TOWER LOCATION AFFECTED BY LIMIT
(shown in feet)

FIGURE 9a

VIEW E CAMBIE BRIDGE

Proposed by staff for adoption by Council policy-impacts

VIEW E. From Cambie Bridge



VIEW E. From Cambie Bridge

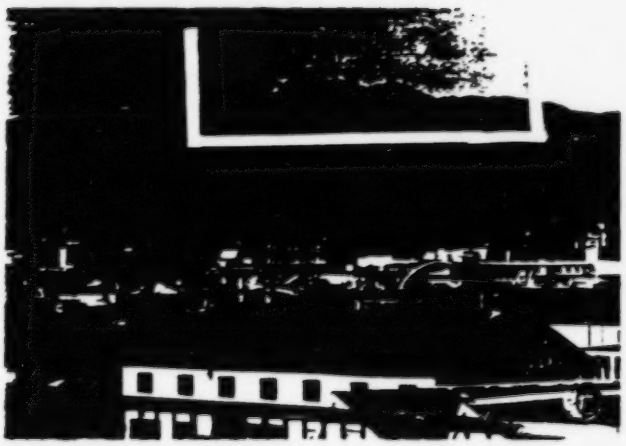


FIGURE 9b
PHOTOS OF VIEW E

APPENDIX A

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Fritz Bowers, Chairman	City Manager
Bruce Maitland	City Properties
Larry Beasley	City Planning
Ian Carter	Committee Member
Ronald Downey	Committee Member
Elizabeth Jarvis	Committee Member
Nancy McKinstry	Committee Member

VANCOUVER VIEWS STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS
(Excerpt from Report #5)

The following are the Consultants Recommendations to Council:

8.1 Action to protect views in Vancouver is appropriate, and is supported by a large majority of Vancouverites, and should be undertaken.

8.2 Views Protection Measures should be clear and specific, clearly identifying viewpoints, focal elements, and the view cones to be protected. Views protection policies and procedures should be consolidated into one document. Protection measures are currently included in general areas, are often vague, and unevenly applied. Consolidation will eliminate uncertainty.

8.3 How view protection measures should be implemented depends on the types of views being protected.

The Views Vancouverites consider most important are typically views of water and mountains from parks that are "not threatened". No protection measures are required now, but if construction is ever planned in parks or on beaches these views may need to be formally recognized, and protected.

These views are (from the survey)

1. Views from Stanley Park
2. Views from Point Grey, Jericho, Spanish Banks and Marine Drive
3. Views from Kitsilano Beach
4. Views of the City from outside (Cypress, Grouse)
5. Views from Canada Harbour Place North
6. Views of the shops on Robson Street
7. Views of the mountains and water from Burrard Bridge (west)
8. Views from Robson Square

8.4 A second group of important views will not be threatened unless existing zoning changes. We recommend that these view cones be incorporated into planning policy as areas where development proposals should include specific detailed analysis of view impact prior to rezoning or significant building activity. This group of views includes:

1. Views from the P.N.E. to the North Shore, and views out over the P.N.E. grounds from adjacent roadways.
2. Knight Street corridor looking north.
3. Views of False Creek South from Bridges. (from Granville and Burrard Bridges out over Granville Island).
4. Fraser Street corridor looking north.
5. Views of Canada Place from various locations. This view is primarily from the Stanley Park seawall out over the Marathon Land Development.

8.5 Important views enjoyed daily by many Vancouverites downtown and in the West End included Street end views: Largley open at present, these views are easily protected and preserved by identification and mapping of the identified corridors: Policy should be developed to ensure all proposals that might block these corridors be clearly identified, and controlled. They are:

1. Westside Street ends (looking north, and north east over the ridgelines of the escarpment).
2. Downtown Street ends north: (typically Thurlow to Seymour).
3. West End Street ends: (typically south and west from Thurlow to Davie, these also include views north from Denman to Bute).

Allowance should be made for other existing corridors becoming important in the future as population grows in other areas of Downtown i.e. Howe, Hornby and Davie Streets to False Creek. Further investigation, evaluation and mapping of these cones should be completed.

8.6 A last group of "threatened" views will require height controls to protect the existing views.

These views include nine identified view corridors for which detailed analysis in the View Study was carried out. Building massing implications and height controls to preserve the full extent of these views were mapped.

Five of the view corridors do not impose significant constraints on development activity. The view corridors proposed in the study could become the basis for height control measures. These views include:

1. Views from Queen Elizabeth Park to the North Shore Mountains.
2. Views along the Cambie Street Corridor north to Downtown.
3. Views down the South Granville Street Corridor to the Mountains over Downtown.
4. Views along Commercial Drive to the North Shore.
5. Views from Trout Lake to the Mountains.

The last four of the nine views need special consideration by Council of our individual recommendations as follows:

6. Views from Granville Island to Downtown: In this case we recommend the Alternative View Cones be protected.

7. Views from Granville Street Bridge to the Mountains over Downtown: In the case of these three views it is recommended that a further detailed study be completed of the view sensitive area to incorporate recent Development Permit Approvals and Rezoning. It is also recommended that further analysis and recommendations be prepared to preserve the remaining view corridors through the buildings and develop a protection policy that matches the "dynamic" aspect of the view enjoyment. Detailed study of the Alternative View Cones should be included. Downzoning of limited areas of Downtown South, changes of use, and other urban design considerations may be necessary.

8. Views down Main Street to the Mountains: The location for this view was selected to analyse the impact of redevelopment proposals at the East End of the Creek. Further analysis needs to be done from view points on Main Street to establish the appropriate height controls.

9. Views from South False Creek over the Downtown Peninsula to the Mountains beyond: As the view analysis showed that no specific view "icon" needs protection, we find that the general image of the city core against a mountain ridgeline needs to be maintained. The selection and analysis of the single viewpoint has been largely superceeded by the recent revised proposal from Concord Pacific. In addition the (single) stationary viewpoint selected in the study probably does not match the public's expectations of being able to enjoy many glimpses of mountain ridge from various viewpoints along the walkway. More analysis and views protection development with the proposals of Concord Pacific is required to meet this objective. After the massing of the Concord Pacific Proposal has been frozen, view corridors over Downtown South will have to be modified, and overall height levels for the Downtown core will also need to be modified. As a result of this recommendation, view cones from South False Creek (#19) have been deleted from the drawings (D1.1 - D2.2) included in this Summary Report.

8.7. Due to the nature and limitations of the View Study, certain measures are necessary prior to the imposition of any height controls arising out of the View Study.

Update of the computer model to include Development Permits and Rezonings that have been approved to date. The View Study was a "snapshot" in time and did not attempt to maintain an up-to-date database. Some "existing" view corridors may no longer exist, when approved Development Permits have been constructed. Once the computer model has been updated it should be maintained with new Development Permits as they are approved. Height control limits and view cones should be updated regularly.

Accurate analytical analysis should be required of all Development Permits Applications relating to the established view corridors and heights. Development Permit applicants should create accurate drawings of their proposals and compare them to the view cones and height limits proposed. This will allow fair and accurate assessment of the visual impacts of Development Permit Proposals in the contest of view preservation.

8.8 As there are other potential important views, and public perceptions of "important" may change over time, **a procedure for the review of views preservation policy should be developed.**

This could possibly coincide with the Vancouver Planning Commission updates of the Goals for Vancouver.

Some candidates for the first 'update' have emerged from the public process associated with this study:

- Views from 8th and Discovery north.
- Views from the Cambie Bridge north.
- Additional views of English Bay (these may be caught when the mapping of all potential street end views is complete).
- The views down street corridors north from Broadway between Hemlock and Cambie (Was View Study cone #23, but a classification change should be examined).

The public should be aware that view protection is for public views primarily, that private views from balconies and places of work out over adjacent properties are not the objective of view preservation policy.

VANCOUVER CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

1989 12 06

TO: Vancouver City Council

SUBJECT: Vancouver Views Study

CLASSIFICATION: RECOMMENDATION

The Chairman of the Vancouver City Planning Commission reports as follows:

SPIRIT OF PLACE

Probably all cities strive for some unique qualities that will give their community a recognizable identity, a character that will stand out and read clearly for residents and visitors alike. Often the city celebrates its famous sons or its architecture, perhaps that it is synonymous with a certain product and trade or the site of historic events.

This city is still too young to boast of these qualities with any confidence and yet to experience Vancouver society in all its manifestations is to recognize that there is about us a complacent belief that we live in an exceptionally blessed city. This serene acceptance of superiority over other urban centres is undoubtedly irritating to outsiders because everyone recognizes that it derives from our magnificent natural endowment and has little to do with the works of man. "A setting in search of a city", was the scornful epithet flung at Vancouver in the 1960s. Vancouverites accept such slurs with equanimity and in poll after poll indicate that they wish to keep man and his works strictly in their place.

> *Most people regard features such as the North Shore mountains, the ocean and the City's parks as making a much greater contribution to the City's visual attractiveness than urban design, architecture or heritage buildings.*
>
> *Vancouver Views Study (1989)*

> *In a second outreach, respondents were asked to identify which component - natural setting, man-made form and buildings or the mix of people - contributed most to the uniqueness and quality of Vancouver. Natural setting, not surprisingly, was identified by 65% of respondents as being most important while the other two reasons split the remaining 35%.*
>
> *Goals for Vancouver (1980)*

The image of Vancouver, however, does, derive from a happy combination of natural setting and man-made forms. If the south shore of Burrard Inlet had not been punctuated and convoluted into bays, peninsulas and inlets and if the CPR had not chosen by happy circumstance to extend the rail head far west to what is now our downtown peninsula, much of the distinctiveness of our city form would not have occurred. The unique feature of Vancouver is that its high density core is viewed against a mountain backdrop from across water. This image was celebrated throughout Expo by the logo of layers of water, building skyline and mountain-line. The presence of water around three-quarters of the downtown peninsula allows the unimpeded vista of downtown towers punctuating the mountains. This is our spirit of place.

> *A fundamental difference between Vancouver and most other cities is in its natural surroundings. That this environment should be visible is a major element of the quality of life in our city.*
>
> Goals for Vancouver (1980)

THE HISTORY OF VIEWS

It would be hard to overestimate the importance of the findings from the Consultants Report #1 in which a public survey of 357 randomly selected residents indicated overwhelming support for view protection even if "it requires significant restrictions on new development."

This is a powerful message to decision-makers even were it to stand alone. But the message does not exist in isolation, it has a long history. It is only the most recent affirmation of the depth and durability of the value that Vancouver residents place on their views. Ten years ago the results of the Goals for Vancouver surveys in 1978-1979 suddenly revealed to a skeptical City Hall that view preservation was the most important and widely-held civic objective in Vancouver. 96% of those who responded to the questionnaire in a 1978 flyer felt that protecting major public views of the mountains and water was important or very important. Six months later a statistically validated survey of 1000 households by a market research firm found the same result - 96% saw view protection as very important, thereby placing it indisputably at the very head of the goals procession.

The Vancouver Views Study's survey of public attitudes this year solicited opinions on the specific matter of the visual attractiveness of Vancouver and the importance of views to that image. On the other hand, the Goals for Vancouver surveys (of which there have been six) included the idea of public view protection among any and all other goals, aspirations and values the public might have wished to raise themselves. Even so, it ranked first in the breadth of its support; and in answer to what should not change in the intensity of its support.

THE URGENCY

When something cherished is disappearing, then what remains of it becomes even more valuable. The Consultant's study on Economic Impacts of View Protection was presented to the VCPC and it was a matter of great relief to discover that "only a small part of the peninsula would suffer severe measurable economic impacts on development potential and land value".

Mr. Jay Wollenberg of Coriolis Consultants Corp., who carried out the Economic Impacts section of the Vancouver Views Study and created a much-admired computer model for assessing these impacts, has suggested that the City be flexible and generous in regulating the individual properties adversely affected within the view cones. In reducing one aspect of a building, its height, Council could advise the approving authorities to be less stringent in their demands on other aspects of the development. The VCPC agrees within the spirit of the Goals for Vancouver which state:

> *The only role for regulation is to help a community reach its collective goals, not to hinder them.*

With the Concord Pacific corridors held safe pending Council's decision on view cones and the approval last week of the North Granville Slopes official development plan with its view cone protected, the moment has surely arrived to dedicate what remains of the threatened corridors to the future citizens of Vancouver.

Mr. Wollenberg, in addressing the Commission, admitted that some views required more work before they became absolutely definitive, but that the reality of the situation is that unless an imperfect views protection policy is adopted very soon, the views will be gone. The time that would be required to make the policy perfect could eliminate the need for the policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Vancouver City Planning Commission recommends:

A. THAT Council adopt as City policy the preservation of important

designated public views as a matter of principle.

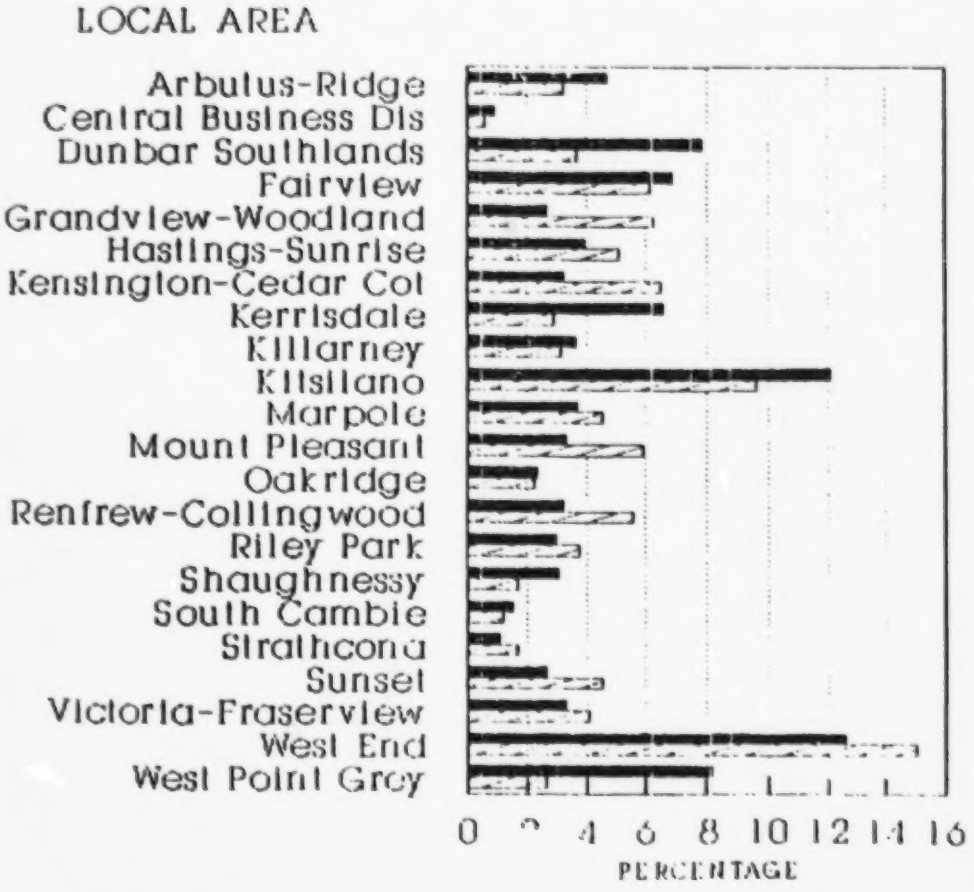
B. THAT Council approve Recommendation A of the City Manager's report of October 27, 1989 to allow the City to proceed with immediate action to implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Vancouver Views Study except with respect to the Granville Street Bridge view cones for which the Commission urges immediate implementation; and that consideration be given to City staff alternatives contained in the Manager's report.

C. THAT Council provide the resources and scheduling required to carry out the follow-up work recommended in the Consultant's report and outlined in the City Manager's report.

Alan Herbert
Chairman

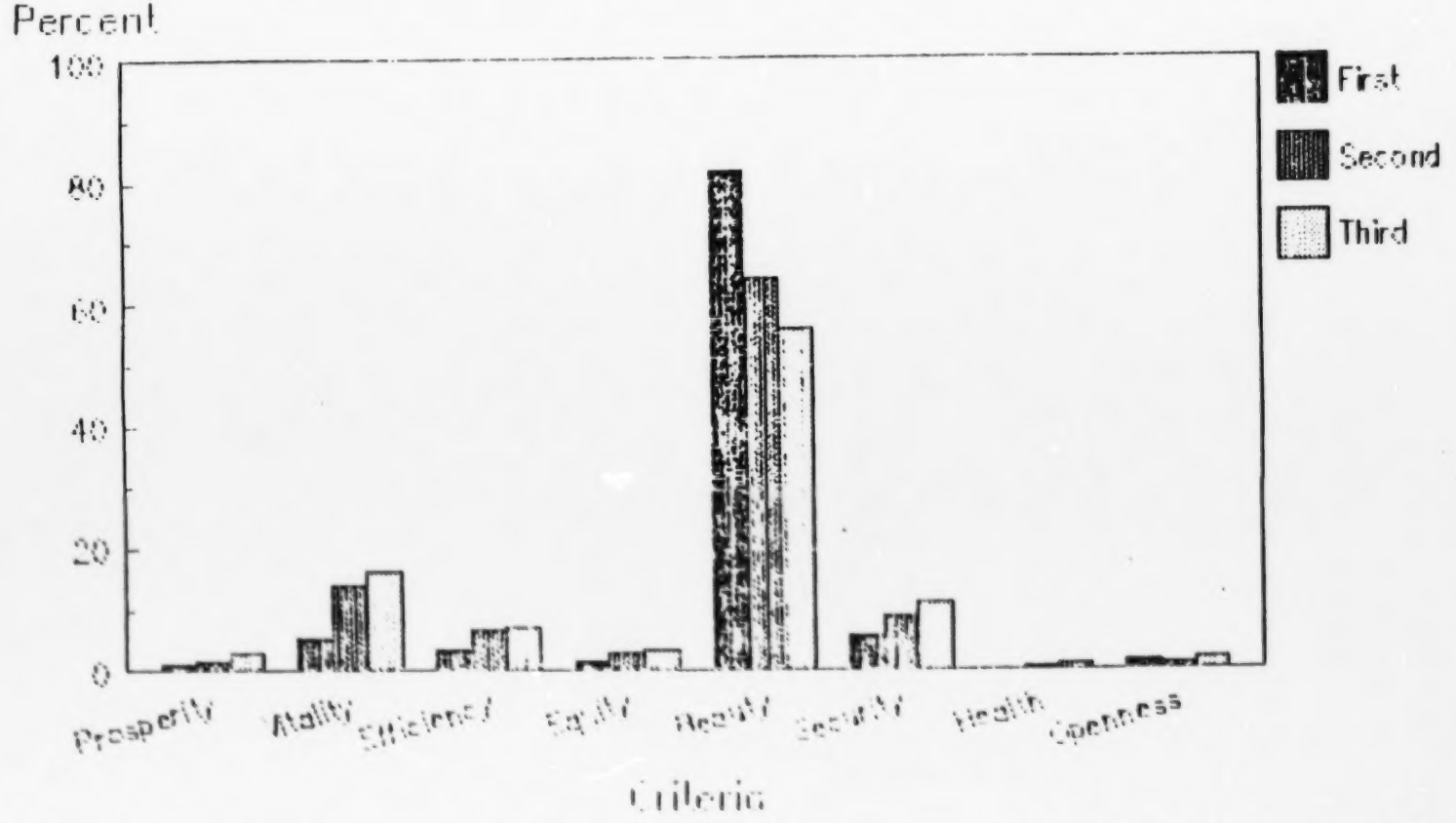
Maryke Gilmore
Vice-Chairman

GOALS FOR VANCOUVER
RESPONSES COMPARED TO HOUSEHOLDS



Refers to VCPC report on Vancouver Views Study (Attached is a computer graphic depicting the public's responses in 1987, using the Planning Department's adaptation of the Goals for Vancouver into eight criteria for evaluating policy and objectives.

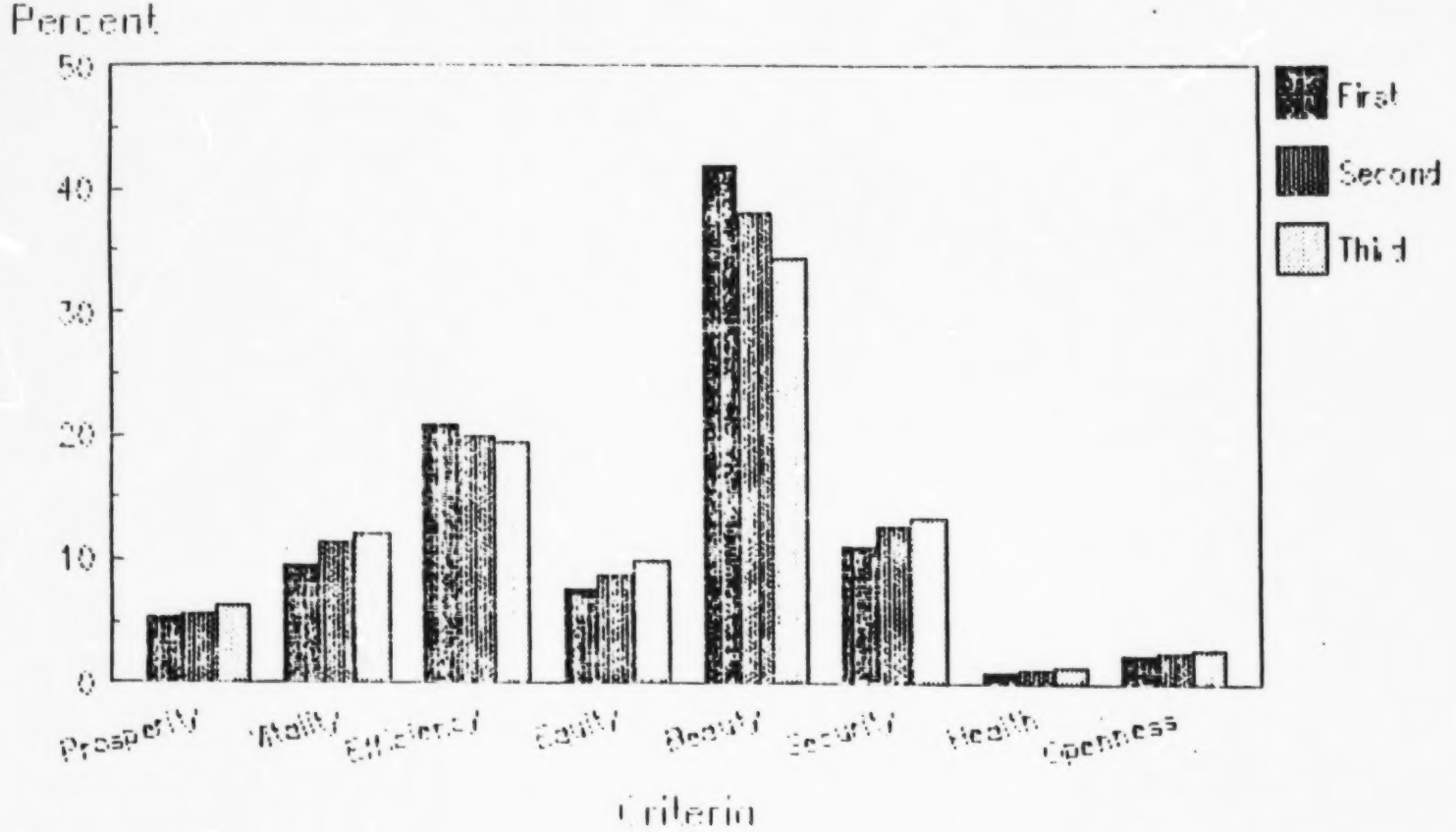
In your mind, what are the three most important things about Vancouver that should not change?



Goals for Vancouver
1987 Survey Responses

Responses to Vancouver Plan
Criteria for Evaluating Change

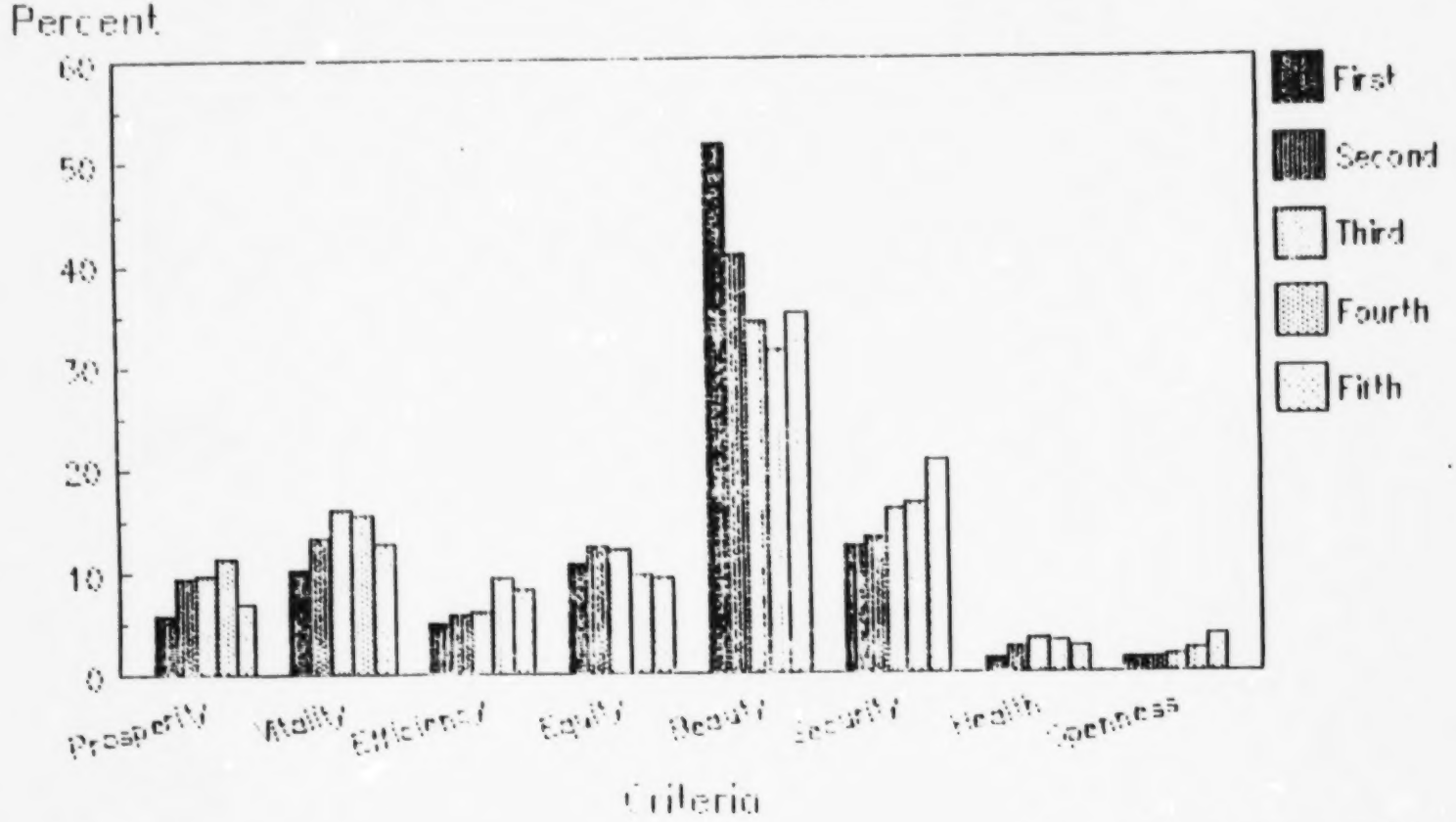
If you were in a position to change or improve any aspects of Vancouver, what three things would you do?



Goals for Vancouver
1987 Survey Responses

Precedent to Vancouver Plan
Criteria for Evaluating Change

Please select from among the complete goals listed here five which are, in your opinion, of the highest priority for action at this time.



Goals for Vancouver
1987 Survey Responses

Recorded to Vancouver Plan
Criteria for Evaluating Change

1989 12 11

Mayor Gordon Campbell
and Members of City Council
Vancouver City Hall
435 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, British Columbia
V5Y 1V4

Your Worship and Members of Council:

Re: Vancouver Views Study

We, the citizen representatives on your Views Consultancy Steering Committee, have been involved from the beginning in shepherding this consultant study and we commend to you the 5-volume conclusion of their work. We have also reviewed fully the City Manager's report of October 27th regarding amendments and implementation of the consultant's findings. The purpose of this letter is to convey to you our advice on all this work to date.

In general we support the work of the consultants and we support the report and recommendations of the City Manager. However, we have several concerns and suggestions, which are listed below, and we would ask that Council consider these in conjunction with the consultant's report and City Manager's report. We see this as an interim views policy and emphasize that it deals with public views rather than private ones.

This is not the end of work towards a public views policy; it is only a good beginning. We urge you to provide the resources necessary to move this work forward and that you make this a City priority. As we move from this interim policy to the point of changing zoning, we suggest the following special attention.

- There should be a full economic impact assessment of each view corridor prior to the Public Hearing that will put the corridors into the zoning. The consultants provided an overall economic impact statement to give a sense of the general implications but further work is needed to understand the effects on specific properties, and to update the assessment to reflect the pattern of corridors now under consideration. The consultant's economic assessment model is a good one that can be used in this further evaluation.

- There should be further study of ways and means to mitigate negative impacts of a views policy on individual properties and such measures should be implemented along with changing zoning for views.

.../2

- There should be adequate time and commitment to have wide public discussion as well as detailed information provided to affected people in preparation for Public Hearing on new zoning for views.

- As negotiations proceed now with individual property owners touched by this interim views policy, any measures now available in zoning or City policy (such as transfer of density) that could be used to mitigate economic loss should be fully exploited.

It appears that the array of view corridors now suggested will have fewer impacts than earlier proposals, yet they also will insure preservation of a good resource of public views for the future. They are defensible because they are derived from survey of public attitudes and expectations. They may well be augmented in the future - indeed, we suspect they should be - but they represent a very good first collection of public views worth preserving in Vancouver. This interim policy step is essential because, otherwise, some of the important views may be compromised or lost in the short run.

We feel our task is now complete and that it has been worthwhile. It is now time for Council and City staff to complete a great deal of technical follow up work to translate this interim policy into law.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Carter
Ronald Downey
Elizabeth Jarvis
Nancy McKinstry

Citizen Representatives
Views Consultancy Steering Committee